In conclusion, the Member pointed out the difficulties experienced by the people of his community in passing through certain public roads in Central and North Travancore and prayed that the Government might be pleased to take the necessary action in the matter.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

167. Desirability of modifying the rules regarding the election of Members to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

Mr. N. Kumaran, B. A. & B. L. (Member, Nominated) said that the object of the Government in granting the privilege of electing the taluk members to the people was to get at the representatives of the people. That object was not fully attained by the present method of election. The members now elected represented the majority and the minorities were still left unrepresented. Very few possessed the minimum property qualification. Further, the existing rules gave scope only for the land-owning classes. Those who contributed to the revenue by indirect taxation had no means of representation. That the principle of election was unsound was further evidenced by the fact that only one Ezhava had as yet come in by election during 11 years, even though the community formed about a sixth of the population of the State. The other grievances of the community were being steadily removed by the Government, but no action was taken on the representations of the Ezhava members regarding the modification of the Assembly Rules. The difficulties arose from the unsympathetic attitude of the communities who had a majority. The Government themselves were convinced of the justice of the demand for a better representation of some of the important communities and the system of nomination was therefore resorted to. But the Member argued that there were several objections to the system of nomination. In the first place, the nominated members were not the representatives of the people, who were not consulted in making the nominations, and therefore they did not voice public opinion. In the second place, nomination was an act of grace on the part of the Government, and the people could not demand it as of right. He pointed out that, in British India, similar difficulties were avoided by granting special electorates. There was no objection to such a system of special electorates being granted to the minorities in Travancore also.

The Member then suggested the following changes in the existing Assembly Rules, with a view to admit more voters from the minorities:—

(1) The property qualification for a voter should be reduced from the payment of a minimum tax of Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 per annum.

(2) The annual income to qualify one to become a voter should be reduced from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 500.

(3) Every graduate of a recognised University should be eligible to vote, and the restriction that he should have a standing of ten years should be removed.

Mr. P. Madhavan Vaidyan (Member, Nominated) said that the necessity for modifying the rules for the election of members to the Assembly was pressed on the attention of the Government by him at the last session but nothing was done in that direction. He now considered that even the reduction of the qualification of a voter in the payment of Sirkar tax from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 would not benefit his community. He therefore suggested that special electorates might be sanctioned for them.

The Member next said that the question of appointing Ezhava members in all the Town Improvement Committees should engage the attention of Government. In those towns, where the privilege of electing the non-official members had been given to the rate-payers of the town, the Ezhava had no chance of becoming a member. He requested that the Government should continue to nominate Ezhava members to those Committees for some time to come. The tax paid to the Committee by the Ezhavas living in a town should not be the basis of nominating Ezhavas to the Committee as in that case he feared that the chances would be limited. The general status of the Ezhavas among the subjects of the State should alone be made the

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basis for nominating members from that community to the various Town Improvement Committees.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

168. Inadequate representation of the Christian community in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

Mr. Ousep Avira Tarakan (Member, Nominated) said that, in point of population and literacy, the Christians were not behind any other community in the State. But they were not having adequate represenation in the Assembly and the fact was brought to the notice of Government at the various sessions. The Government themselves were convinced of their grievances and nomination was resorted to as a measure of relief. The number of elected taluk members from Christians at the present session was only 5 out of 43. The minimum qualification for a voter was the payment of a Sirkar tax of Rs. 50 per annum. On account of the division of properties in each family the number of individual Christians paying that tax was fewer than the number of individual members of other communities to whom partition was not permitted by law. The Member suggested that the reduction of the minimum tax from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25 would afford some relief to the Christians. If that suggestion was not considered feasible, the Christians of those taluks, where their population was large, should be allowed to elect a member of their own for each of such taluks.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

169. The Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the Mahomedans.

Mr. Pitcha Vava Sahib (Member, Nominated) suggested that the Mahomedan members nominated to the Assembly every year by the Government should be those who were able and competent to bring before the notice of the Government the urgent needs of the community in the matter of education, and that they should be nominated from towns where the Mahomedans inhabited in large numbers or from associations which worked for the social regeneration of the community. He said that there were over 9,000 Mahomedans in the town of Alleppey. An association called "Lajanathul Mahamadeeya" was formed in the town to improve the general condition of the community, particularly in matters educational. Without active support from the Government it was not possible for the Mahomedans of Alleppey to achieve their object. He therefore requested that it be ruled that one of the four nominations accorded to the Mahomedans should be made from the town of Alleppey for some years tocome.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

170. Desirability of allowing one more Member to the Assembly from the Ambalapuzha taluk.

Mr. Ousep Chacko (Member, Ambalapuzha taluk) said that trade and industry depended mainly on agriculture and therefore the latter was more important. Even though there were traders throughout the State, particular places which were trade centres were allowed to elect a member to the Assembly. There were thus seven representatives of traders. It was equally necessary to give such centres of agriculture as Kuttanad and Nanjanad, special representatives for agriculturists. It was therefore desirable to allow one more member for Ambalapuzha.

Again, the tenants holding Crown lands were everywhere treated with distinction. More than two-thirds of the Kandukrishi lands in Travancore were in his taluk and the revenue from that head alone was about three times the ordinary land revenue of a taluk. It was therefore also desirable to allow one more member for the taluk.

Dewan.—The privilege of electing two members is given to those taluks of the State which have a population of 1,25,000 and above.

The Member said that population alone should not be the basis of calculation. The revenue collected, the special conditions, etc., were also facts to be taken into consideration in determining the question. The Member requested that the privilege

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